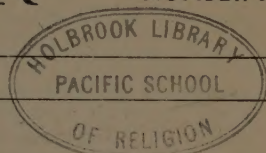


## NEWS LETTER

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SUMMER, 1954



## OUR TASK

THE purpose of our Historical Society is precisely this: To give reverent attention to our heritage; that we may be more effective in doing our whole duty in our day and generation. It is a serious matter for a people to make the same mistakes over and over again by reason of simple ignorance. "The mistakes of one generation become the calamity of the next." Because of our heritage we have a responsibility that we may evade only at the risk of losing what is infinitely precious. We are custodians of that heritage. We dare not be false to it or shirk our duty. The task of our Historical Society is to make known our heritage. To this end our Society works.

During the long and tedious Colonial years, 176 years (1607-1783) or six generations, the American colonists worked out political, social and religious ideals; developed a love of freedom and the stamina to make good their determination to be a free people under God. In New England their way of life was known as the "American way." They made many mistakes, attempted impossible tasks, but won their way to be a free people; gained certain solid understandings and helped to set enduring patterns. The first generation came with a sense of mission, to which the succeeding generations renewed their allegiance. They kept a loyalty to their foundation principles and faithfully taught all this and much more to their children. They were determined that their lives be not lived in vain and that their children enter a still larger life.

These New England forefathers built in cooperation with Presbyterians, Baptists and with liberal Anglicans of Virginia. The common ideals and the needs arising in a new land brought these groups into cooperation, and the United States, a nation of resolute purpose, came into being.

The second period (1783-1954) of almost equal length (171 years) of national life has seen many changes, for there have come into American life Germans, Irish, Southern Europeans, Greeks, Scandinavians, Poles, Asiatics and others, all bringing traditions, church relationships, and new ways of living, to our enrichment, perplexity and concern. Scientific and industrial developments have also brought complications and re-enforcements.

The essential factors, however, that face a free people seeking to maintain a society in harmony with the revealed will of God remain constant. The American Way, flexible and fluid, is still pioneering. Our task is to build ever stronger a national unity inspired by worthy motives on solid foundations. Human nature does not change in any significant aspect. The problems of today are kindred to those the New England Fathers faced. The responsibility for leadership that rests upon the lineal descendants of the makers of America is not one whit less than was theirs. As we face today's complexities, the pioneer spirit must still be maintained. Our

duty to clarify ideals and purposes, and to realize them, continues with increasing force.

Human institutions and procedures are built on foundations long since laid. Jesus built on the age-old religious authority of the Old Testament. His disciples built on His foundation, and so did our Fathers. It is securely laid. We, too, must be mindful of the experiences of the ages, profiting by their successes and taking warning by their failures. It is as true now as when the words were first spoken, many centuries ago: "Righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach to any people." F. L. F.

## FINANCIAL MATTERS

Receipts to August 1, 1954	\$3,512.00
Expenses	3,237.72

### Budget for 1954:

Rent	\$ 426.00
Telephone and Telegraph	50.00
Postage and Mailing	320.00
Supplies and Books	250.00
Meetings and Travel	250.00
Printing	400.00
Secretarial Service	2,160.00
Secretary	1,500.00
Advertising and Miscellaneous	144.00
	<hr/>
	\$5,500.00

Note: For 1955 a small increase in budget will be required for urgent needs for printing and postage for the rapidly expanding educational program.

### Pledges made for 1954:

The American Board	\$ 500.00
The Board of Home Missions	750.00
The General Council	1,000.00
The State Conferences	1,100.00

### To be Secured

Churches and Individuals	2,150.00
	<hr/>
	\$5,500.00

Note: The Treasurer's report shows the generous support of the Society by the Boards, also the loyal backing of the General Council and of the State Conferences. There is also a growing support by the churches and interested individuals. The contributions of the Boards have been given with the understanding that just as soon as possible a wide basis of support shall be established. A good beginning has been made but many more annual contributions are needed.

P. DONALD FOLWELL,  
Chairman Finance Committee

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Dr. Bradford, in presenting the Report of the Society to the General Council at New Haven, said in part as follows:

The Congregational Christian Historical Society was formally organized two years ago, after some years of preliminary planning and study to meet a long neglected duty of this generation to prepare ourselves the better to serve our own times and to preserve for future generations the rich values of our historic years. It is a co-operative enterprise. Sharing in its work they did in its organization, are The General Council, The American Congregational Association, The Board of Home Missions, The American Board for Foreign Missions, The State Superintendents Conference and interested churches and individuals across the nation.

As William Blake said, nearly 200 years ago, "What is now proved was once only imagined." The now proven value of our Historical Society was once only imagined in the minds of a few. The present accomplishments and the possibilities of this Society are due to the careful work of this small group working in close harmony toward a worthy goal. The officers and members are seeking to cultivate interest in our heritage so that our churches and our people may make the greatest possible contribution to strengthening the moral fiber of our communities and our nation in this fateful age in which we live.

## GENERAL COUNCIL APPROVAL

The Society was formally approved by the General Council of Congregational Christian Churches at its meeting in New Haven in June. The vote was Resolved: That this Council approve the Purpose and Program of Congregational Christian Historical Society and advise its Executive Committee to continue its support subject to recommendation of its budget committee, and

Further, that this Council commend the Historical Society to the National Agency, State Conferences, local churches and interested individuals, and invite their co-operation in the program and in such financial support as may be able and willing to extend.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held in the Old South Church, Boston, Wednesday, November 10th. The luncheon will be in honor of Prof. Perry Miller. Reservations (\$2.00 each) should be sent to Rev. J. A. Harrer, 14 Beacon St., Boston 8, Mass.

The Fall number of *The News Letter* will be devoted to material for observance of our fathers' Day, November 21st.



The Sesquicentennial of the founding of the *Herald of Gospel Liberty*, the first religious journal, will be observed in 1958. This paper, the official journal of the Christian Church, was merged with *Advance* in 1931. The Christian Church Committee of this Society, Dr. Warren L. Dennison, Grinnell, Iowa, Chairman, will be in charge of arrangements.

## A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE WORK OF THE SOCIETY

For the Local Church and Individuals.

Enlisting and counseling local church historians. (156 now enrolled and one meeting held.)

Emphasizing the value of the local church observing its anniversaries, furnishing sample programs and literature for church and community use. (188 churches will reach an anniversary in 1955.)

Gathering historical records, books and commemorative addresses for safe keeping. (Many such books and records have been received and safely placed and catalogued.)

Assisting pastors, church workers and students to secure desired information. (Some letters are easily answered and others require considerable research.)

Recommending speakers for church occasions. A group of competent speakers is being enlisted and on request recommended to the churches.)

In General.

Seeking the appointment of conference historians. (Three recently appointed, making a total of twelve.)

Developing a standard program for conference historians. (Such a plan is under study, looking forward to orderly and helpful procedures.)

Conducting a nation-wide program for a fitting observance of Forefathers' Day (the Sunday preceding Thanksgiving, this year, November 1) that a better understanding of our heritage may be gained. (Program and promotion material prepared and widely distributed.)

Correcting erroneous or misleading statements in books and newspapers. (Several flagrant misstatements corrected.)

Writing manuscripts for general publication. (More calls for this service than can be accepted.)

Speaking on behalf of a better knowledge of our history — "An institution without a history is like a child without a family." (Always a pleasure when time permits.)

Running an office and keeping the treasurer supplied with sufficient funds to meet our modest budget. (So far so good.)

## A LITTLE SPICE OF ANTIQUITY

Governor Winthrop of the first generation said:

"The Lord hath brought vs hither through the welling seas, through perills of Pyrats, tempests, leakes, fyres, Rocks, sands, diseases, starvings: and hath here preserved vs these many yeares from the displeasure of Princes, the envy and Rage of Prelats, the malignant Plotts of Jesuits, the mutinous contentions of discontented persons, the open and secret Attempts of barbarous Indians, the seditious and undermining practises of hereticall false brethren."

Seventy years later Cotton Mather said:

"And many of you being immediate Successors, cannot but be very sensible what these New-England Liberties have Cost your Progenitors, some of them having buried their Estates, and all of them their bones in these Foundations, and left you now in Possession, that if you should put Contempt upon their Adventures, their Courage, Wisdom, Zeal, and Self-denial, by Under-prizing these Inestimable Infranchizements, and slight them . . . God may then put you to learn the Worth of them at that School where they Learnt it; and I am sure you will pay dear for your Tutoring if it comes to that."

Note. Santayana of this generation said "a people that forgets its history will be forced to relive it."

## CHURCH HISTORIANS, PLEASE NOTE

Would you like a free copy of Professor Roland Bainton's delightful little pamphlet on the beginnings of Congregationalism in New Haven Colony? This booklet was given by the New Haven Association to all their guests at the General Council in June. We secured some extra copies which we are sending to all local church historians whose names and addresses we have, but we are sure there are many more of you of whom we do not know. This is your chance to register with the Society and to receive a reward.

H. K.

## MEMBERSHIP IN THE SOCIETY

1. Contributing National and State agencies are voting members of the Society and name representatives to the Board of Governors.
2. Churches contributing \$10.00 or more per year become full voting members and those contributing less become Associate members of the Society.
3. Individuals contributing \$5.00 or more per year become Sustaining (voting) members and those contributing less become Associates of the Society.

All contributors receive the *News Letter* and other publications and reports of the Society.

## AN EARNEST AND FRANK APPEAL

When one thinks of our history as being three centuries old and even older, it is most surprising that our Society, established to collect, and to inform us of interesting facts about our history, should be so young. But so it is and we have much time to make up for.

This is an earnest and frank appeal for your support that, strengthened by your gifts, and representing more of our churches, the Society may be able to serve more efficiently and in the wider field that it envisions.

The ideal support would be every church putting the Historical Society into its annual budget. A gift of \$10.00 or more will make the church a full voting member of the Society. By a gift of less than that a church becomes an associate. Some of our churches are contributing \$50.00 a year but we realize that we have many smaller churches whose gifts may of necessity be less.

The ideal support will also include many interested persons. The list of individual members is growing. A contribution of \$5.00 or more makes one a full voting member, and a smaller amount, an associate. We need many more individual members.

The surprising and delightful item in our present rules is that both members and associates alike receive the *News Letter* and other publications. We know that according to your interest and your means you will give us your financial support.

If you are the minister of a church will you bring this matter before your people for a church gift and will you pass this *News Letter* on to your members who you think might be interested. This Historical Society belongs to us all. The Missions Council has approved September for the Society's annual solicitation.

Please send your contribution to the office of the Society. Thank you.

HELEN KENYON,

Chairman of the Committee on Public Relations

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Note. This *News Letter* may be mailed to your friend. Write name and address below — stamp. Additional copies free on request.

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